

# The Messenger

A newsletter of the people of First Lutheran Church, Waltham

The First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Waltham  
The Rev. Thomas E. Maehl, Pastor  
www.firstlutheranwaltham.org

April/May 2022  
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## Easter Update

On Easter Sunday, we are changing our worship practice in these ways:

- 8:15 am —**we will add singing.** Still every other pew will be roped off, and we ask everyone to mask.
- 10:30 am—**we are opening up the seating** (no longer roping off every other pew). Still we ask everyone to mask.

It continues to be a challenge to make plans for worship, never knowing for sure what positivity levels will be. I'm thankful for the reopening team who are acting with such care in trying to balance the need for safety with the need for being together in community. I do hope you will consider joining with others either physically or remotely as we walk together with Jesus through holy week to Easter.

## Sabbatical Update

I leave for sabbatical after worship on May 1. Following each of the services there will be time for fellowship (hopefully outdoors); my thanks to the members of the Church Council for hosting.

Know that while I am gone you will be in good hands. I'm thankful for Vicar Samantha who will be providing pastoral care as needed, and to our gifted supply pastors Angelika Zollfrank and Kristian Kohler; note they will be leading interesting adult forums in May (see page 2).

I will miss you all, but will look forward to my return on August 22.

Blessed Easter, Pastor Maehl

## Holy Week Schedule

Join us as we retell, reengage, and celebrate the central story of our Christian faith, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.



### April 10 - Palm Sunday

**8:15 & 10:30 am**

Traditional Palm Sunday service



### April 14 - Maundy Thursday

**11:30 am in person** - An abbreviated service of Holy Communion at the end of Thursday Knitters.

**7:30 pm in person and FB Live** - A service with optional individual absolution, holy communion, and stripping of the altar for Good Friday.



### April 15 - Good Friday

**7:30 pm in person and FB Live**

Worship including the reading of Saint John's passion account.



### April 16 - Easter Vigil

**7:30 pm in person only**

We celebrate Christ's Passover from death to life in a worship service that includes an outdoor fire, stories of deliverance, John's Easter account, and Holy Communion.

### April 17 - Easter Sunday

**8:15 in person only & 10:30 am in person and FB Live** - Festive worship with Holy Communion, flowers, bells, and brass.

## Nurturing Faith

### Adult Forums

#### Sunday 9:15 am in the Pearson Room

**April 3:** Sabbatical plans and rationale led by Pastor Maehl and members of the church council.

**April 10:** Conclusion of the four-part series *Disagreeing About Things that Matter*, led by Steve Waldron.

**April 17:** Easter Sunday no Adult Forum

**April 24:** TBD

**May 1:** Sabbatical Sending. Refreshments will be provided and instead of an adult forum there will be opportunity for fellowship. (Hopefully it will be nice enough to have fellowship outdoors!)

**May 8, 15, 22:** Pastor Angelika Zollfrank, chaplain at McClean Hospital in Belmont will lead conversations on addiction, depression and anxiety, hope and gratitude.

**May 29:** Pastor Kristian Kohler will lead a conversation on 'queer hymnody,' lifting up new expressions of church music arising from the LGBTQ community.

### Lenten Wednesdays

#### Thank you

Our thanks to those who offered to share a portion of their faith story during evening prayer: Ann Sjodin, LuAnn Kimker, Leslie Waters, Samantha DiBiaso, and Sammy Kalisa.

Additionally, we give thanks for those who coordinated the cooking of meals for the guests of the Waltham Community Day Center: Emily Citrone and Signe Johns; Leslie, Valarie, and Penny Waters; Carlos Guillen and Larissa Martinez; Vicar Samantha; and Doris Speer.

Also thanks to Jen Lambert, Vicar Samantha, and Pastor Maehl for providing soup; and to all who came to help with the food preparation.



### Vacation Bible School July 18-22, 2022

We are thankful to report that after a two-year pandemic hiatus, we will again be offering a Vacation Bible School this summer. Given that the pandemic is not yet over, we are adapting and scaling down the program a bit from prior years. Here are some general details:

- The program will run from 11 am to 3 pm (shorter than in prior years)
- We are welcoming children ages 5 and older (no preschool class this year)
- Our plan is to prepare bagged lunches and have lunch eaten outside.

We are thankful that Sarah Rauhut has offered to serve as VBS director and Anne Dugan as registrar. Watch your email for registration coming out soon!

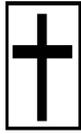
Please consider:

- inviting friends and/or neighbors who have elementary aged children.
- Offering to help one or more days of VBS week.
- Offering to help with decorations or other preparations before VBS begins,

Also, please, please pray for this event. Pray that God will lead to us the children who need to be here, that God will raise up leaders for the varied components of the program, and that God will bless all those who participate.

For more information, or if you would like to offer to help, please contact Sarah Rauhut.

## Serving Others



*From the  
Vicar*



A few weeks ago the youth hiked Prospect Hill after church. During our hike we found a variety of wildlife out and about on the first day of spring. We came across a garden snake crossing our path, a cooing owl in the trees above us, and a variety of other birds flying around us. Something else we came across that surprised us all was a sea of white and purple blooming crocus flowers. Not only did these bright flowers stand out among the dead leaves around them, but they also sparked a conversation about where we see God today. In the midst of war in Ukraine, the uncertainty of COVID, and our own personal struggles, God is still creating new life in the midst of death.

I wanted to learn more about these beautiful flowers we found on our hike and through my research discovered that crocuses have served as a rich symbol of rebirth, joy, and new beginnings. These crocus flowers have shown me signs of hope this week as I struggle to keep Lent and pray for peace in our world. In Psalm 104:30, the psalmist sings, *"When you send your Spirit, they (all creatures) are created, and you renew the face of the ground."* Maybe that renewal looks like bright purple and white crocus flowers in a sea of fallen leaves. New life is coming beloved community. May the hope and anticipation of the resurrection continue to carry you through these last few weeks of Lent.

- Vicar Samantha

## Nelson Board Update

As many of you know, a new apartment building was purchased last August. For that purchase the Nelson board applied for, and was granted, \$420,000 in Community Preservation Funds from the City of Waltham. At the closing in August of 2021, we learned that to keep the Community Preservation Funds, we would need to comply with the state's affordable housing regulations; at the time, however, we were unaware of how extensive these regulations are. As members of the board began exploring the rules and regulations, we learned that among other constraints we would need to run a formal lottery process each time a unit was vacant, and the rules for this were so extensive that we would need to hire an outside agency at considerable cost to run the lottery. Additionally, should the board desire in years to come to house refugees or asylum seekers, that would not be possible as, again, every opening would need to be filled via a formal lottery process.

Given these and other constraints, the board decided to return the Community Preservation Funds. The board discerned that they were able to both contribute and borrow more money. On February 22, 2022, there was another closing, the Community Preservation funds were returned, and now the new apartment belongs fully to the Nelson Memorial Apartments, Inc.

I am so grateful to the whole board for their work over the past year, and in particular to Geri Nederhoff and Janice Ostrander who have offered so much time and effort getting us to this place.

May God continue to bless our affordable housing ministry!

Pastor Maehl

## Serving Others

### Lutheran World Relief Update from [www.lwr.org](http://www.lwr.org)

Lutheran World Relief and our Corus International family of organizations\* stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine. Nearly 3 million people in eastern Ukraine are already in need of humanitarian assistance. As the attack on Ukraine escalates, the devastating crisis threatens lives, health systems and livelihoods. With worsening food shortages and damaged infrastructure, overwhelming mass displacement looms.

“The current situation in Ukraine is deteriorating by the hour,” says Daniel Speckhard, President and CEO of Corus International. “Critical humanitarian aid is needed within Ukraine and for those fleeing the catastrophic crisis. Our hearts are with the Ukrainian people.”

Corus is committing \$3 million to respond to this crisis. Our Humanitarian Action team is identifying and working with partners in and around Ukraine to rapidly develop programming plans based on short- and long-term needs. We are bringing together expertise from our Corus organizations IMA World Health, Lutheran World Relief and CGA Technologies. We are providing emergency funds to Ukrainian refugee families in Poland. Cash will be distributed at Lutheran churches throughout southwest Poland. We plan to continue our response efforts in Ukraine, in neighboring countries hosting Ukrainian refugees, and in other countries suffering from the inevitable ripple effects, like fuel and food disruptions.

**Contributions to LWR efforts can be made at <https://www.lwr.org/>**

*\* Note: Corus is an ensemble of non-profits and for-profits working in concert to end extreme poverty once and for all.*

### Youth Update

In the past month the youth have been busy bees! At the beginning of the month, we gathered back in person together for the first time in 2022 for lunch and community time. We also went hiking together on the first day of spring after worship where we saw lots of wildlife. The youth were also able to lead in preparing a meal for the Waltham Community Day Center as a part of our Lenten Wednesday evening program. What a joy it has been to build in community with the youth during the month of March. We are also looking forward to having the youth participate in our Easter Vigil service on April 16<sup>th</sup>!

Additionally, after much discernment and planning, we have unfortunately decided to cancel the trip to Minnesota this summer. With so many cancelations of attendees, we felt it would be best to cancel with hopes for another National Youth Gathering in 2024. Although this wasn't an easy decision, I am excited for what the summer may bring us here at First Lutheran, for our youth, and in your own lives.

- Vicar Samantha

### A Prayer for Ukraine

*From Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby*

God of peace and justice, we pray for the people of Ukraine today.

We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons.

We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow, that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.

We pray for those with power over war or peace, for wisdom, discernment and compassion to guide their decisions.

Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear, that you would hold and protect them.

We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.  
Amen

## Walking Together in God's Love

### Prayer Concerns



**Members of our First Lutheran Community:** Sarah Allen; Jen Biter; Joan Clemens; John Elander; Rosy Hebert; Eddie Hughes; June Jahrling; Erika Jerram; Steve Latter; Kathryn McCowan; Don & Britta McNemar; Kerry Meaney; Cynthia Niiler, Joan and Jüri Niiler, Sandra Schwab; Leslie Waters.

**Friends and Family:** Adekemi (*friend of Sarah Rauhut*); Lauriana Arevalo & Eustaquio Dubon (parents of August Arevalo); Elaine Chan (aunt of Catherine Pinch); Emily Clemens (*niece of Joan Clemens*); Lavara Clemens (*mother of Joan Clemens*); Pam & Ken Cochran (COTW partner; Steve Codner (father-in-law of Emily Codner); Leslie Crowe (*friend of Connie and Jeanette Fagone*); Handel Dixon; Donna (*friend of LuAnn Kimker*); Chuck Flinner (*father of Kat Flinner*); Norma Huisman (*aunt of Brad Nederhoff*); Joyce; Ellen and Duke Katterheinrich (*LuAnn Kimker's parents*); Sylvia and Chris Lee-Thompson (friend of Susan Pintus); Marybeth; Peter Melanson (*brother-in-law of Matt and Erika Jerram*); Jason Mihalko (*friend of Matt Jerram*); Pappas family (friends of Jennifer Lambert); Cathy Platfoot (cousin of LuAnn Kimker); Sally Raymond (*Jen Biter's mom*); Susan Raymond (sister-in-law to Jen & Bill Biter); Stacey Reed (*sister of Penny Alexander*); Margie and Roger Schroeder (*Curt Schroeder's parents*); Ann Sewich (*sister of Meg Maehl*); Doug Sewich (*brother-in-law of Meg and Tom Maehl*); Maria Silva (*aunt of Olga Jimenez*); Matthew Stanhope (*partner of Jane Danielson*); Amelia, Chris, and Gwendolyn Steele (cousins of the Codner family); Wayne & Carol Sukow (*parents of Cathy Sukow*); Tara Waters (*family of Penny & Marquette Alexander*); Jim Wroe (*cousin of Carol Hansen*).

**For our partners:** Santuario Luterano, the Spanish speaking Lutheran congregation in Waltham, and for their interim leader: Rafaela Radcke. For other organizations we actively support: the Waltham Family School, the Waltham Community Day Center, Chaplains on the Way, the Waltham Alliance to Create Housing, Camp Calumet, and ELCA World Hunger.

*If you would like to add/remove a name to/from the prayer list, please inform the church office.*

### Graduates!



Is someone in your family graduating? Please let us know so we can list graduates in the June Messenger. It is nice to have the following information: Name, where graduating from, degree received (if appropriate), and plans for next year.

**First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Waltham**

**Ministers:** The people of the congregation

**Staff:** The Rev. Thomas E. Maehl, Pastor  
tmaehl@rcn.com

Ms. Cynthia Niiler,  
Director of Music and Parish Secretary  
firstlutheranwalthamoffice@gmail.com

Vicar Samantha DiBiaso, Intern  
sdibiaso@capital.edu

**Council:** President: Ann Sjodin  
Vice-President: LuAnn Kimker  
Secretary: Julie Weeden  
Treasurer: Susan Pintus

Holly Diaz  
Sammy Kalisa  
Jennifer Lambert  
Beth Mellilo  
Curt Schroeder

**Worship:**

Sundays:  
8:15 am in person  
10:30 am in person and Facebook Live

**Visit us on the Web at:**

[www.firstlutheranwaltham.org](http://www.firstlutheranwaltham.org)



and on Facebook at First Lutheran  
Church - Waltham, MA

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**Our Mission:** We discern that Jesus Christ is calling us to:

*Walk together in God's love: nurturing faith, doing justice, serving all.*